CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1.   A browser window configured to display on a display screen data that facilitates freight shipment between a first geographic location and a second geographic location, said browser window being accessible via a computer network, comprising:

a first data section configured to display derivative contract data pertaining to shipment capacity offered by carriers between said first geographic location and said second geographic location, said derivative contract data being associated with at least two of a air mode, a sea mode, a train mode, and a truck mode; and

a second data section configured to be viewed simultaneously with said first data section, said second data section displaying forecast data pertaining to demand forecasts between said first geographic location and said second geographic location by shippers.

2.   The browser window of claim 1 wherein said second data section further includes rating data associated with said forecast data, each rating in said rating data reflects both a qualitative assessment of a forecast associated with said each rating and a quantitative assessment of said forecast associated with said each rating.

3.   The browser window of claim 1 wherein said second data section further includes rating data associated with said forecast data, each rating in said rating data reflects one of a qualitative assessment of a forecast associated with said each rating and a quantitative assessment of said forecast associated with said each rating.

4.   The browser window of claim 3 wherein said qualitative assessment represents an aggregated value that takes into account qualitative assessments from different shippers.

5.   The browser window of claim 3 wherein said qualitative assessment is associated with a shipper that furnishes said forecast associated with said each rating and wherein said second data section includes an identity of said shipper that furnishes said forecast associated with said each rating.

6. The browser window of claim 1 wherein said quality assessment includes at least four of a set of criteria that includes demand, manufacturing readiness, manufacturing location, capacity, product, lane, and lane stability.

7. The browser window of claim 1 wherein said derivative contract data represents futures contract data.

8. The browser window of claim 1 wherein said derivative contract data represents option contract data.

9. The browser window of claim 1 further comprising a third data section configured to display unfulfilled derivative contract order data, said third data section being configured to be view simultaneously with said first data section and said second data section.

10. The browser window of claim 1 further comprising a third data section configured to display matched derivative contract order data.

11. The browser window of claim 1 further comprising a third data section configured to display unfulfilled derivative contract order data and a fourth data section configured to display successfully matched derivative contract order data, said third data section and said fourth data section being configured to be view simultaneously with said first data section and said second data section.

12. The browser window of claim 1 wherein a displayed data item in said derivative contract data represents a plurality of capacity offers from at least a subset of said shippers.

13. The browser window of claim 12 wherein each displayed data item in said derivative contract data is bundled from data associated with a plurality of capacity offers from at least a subset of said shippers, said each displayed data item being associated with a single mode, at least two of displayed data items in said derivative contract data are associated with two different modes.

14. The browser window of claim 12 wherein said plurality of offers are bundled into a derivate contract represented by said displayed data item in accordance to a geographic bundling criterion.

15. The browser window of claim 14 wherein said plurality of offers are bundled into a derivate contract represented by said displayed data item in accordance to a time frame bundling criterion.

16. A method for facilitating freight shipment between a first geographic location and a second geographic location, comprising:

displaying in a first data section of a browser window derivative contract data pertaining to shipment capacity offered by carriers between said first geographic location and said second geographic location, said derivative contract data being associated with at least two of a air mode, a sea mode, a train mode, and a truck mode; and

displaying in a second data section of said browser window forecast data pertaining to demand forecasts between said first geographic location and said second geographic location by shippers, said second data section being configured to be viewed simultaneously with said first data section, said browser window being configured to be accessible via a computer network.

17. The method of claim 16 further including displaying in said second data section rating data associated with said forecast data, each rating in said rating data reflects both a qualitative assessment of a forecast associated with said each rating and a quantitative assessment of said forecast associated with said each rating.

18. The method of claim 16 further including displaying in said second data section rating data associated with said forecast data, each rating in said rating data reflects one of a qualitative assessment of a forecast associated with said each rating and a quantitative assessment of said forecast associated with said each rating.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein said qualitative assessment represents an aggregated value that takes into account qualitative assessments from different shippers.

20. The method of claim 18 wherein said qualitative assessment is associated with a shipper that furnishes said forecast associated with said each rating and wherein said second data section includes an identity of said shipper that furnishes said forecast associated with said each rating.

21. The method of claim 16 wherein said quality assessment includes at least four of a set of criteria that includes demand, manufacturing readiness, manufacturing location, capacity, product, lane, and lane stability.

22. The method of claim 16 wherein said derivative contract data represents futures contract data.

23. The method of claim 16 wherein said derivative contract data represents option contract data.

24. The method of claim 16 further including displaying in a third data section unfulfilled derivative contract order data, said third data section being configured to be view simultaneously with said first data section and said second data section.

25. The method of claim 16 further including displaying in a third data section matched derivative contract order data.

26. The method of claim 16 further including displaying in a third data section unfulfilled derivative contract order data and displaying in a fourth data section successfully matched derivative contract order data, said third data section and said fourth data section being configured to be view simultaneously with said first data section and said second data section.

27. The method of claim 16 wherein a displayed data item in said derivative contract data represents a plurality of capacity offers from at least a subset of said shippers.

28. The method of claim 27 wherein each displayed data item in said derivative contract data is bundled from data associated with a plurality of capacity offers from at least a subset of

said shippers, said each displayed data item being associated with a single mode, at least two of displayed data items in said derivative contract data are associated with two different modes.

29. The method of claim 27 wherein said plurality of offers are bundled into a derivate contract represented by said displayed data item in accordance to a geographic bundling criterion.

30. The method of claim 29 wherein said plurality of offers are bundled into a derivate contract represented by said displayed data item in accordance to a time frame bundling criterion.

31. An article of manufacture comprising a program storage medium having computer readable code embodied therein, said computer readable code being configured to facilitating freight shipment between a first geographic location and a second geographic location, comprising:

computer readable code for displaying in a first data section of a browser window derivative contract data pertaining to shipment capacity offered by carriers between said first geographic location and said second geographic location, said derivative contract data being associated with at least two of a air mode, a sea mode, a train mode, and a truck mode; and

computer readable code for displaying in a second data section of said browser window forecast data pertaining to demand forecasts between said first geographic location and said second geographic location by shippers, said second data section being configured to be viewed simultaneously with said first data section, said browser window being configured to be accessible via a computer network.

32. The article of manufacture of claim 31 further including computer readable code for displaying in said second data section rating data associated with said forecast data, each rating in said rating data reflects both a qualitative assessment of a forecast associated with said each rating and a quantitative assessment of said forecast associated with said each rating.

33. The article of manufacture of claim 31 further including computer readable code for displaying in said second data section rating data associated with said forecast data, each rating

in said rating data reflects one of a qualitative assessment of a forecast associated with said each rating and a quantitative assessment of said forecast associated with said each rating.

34. The article of manufacture of claim 33 wherein said qualitative assessment represents an aggregated value that takes into account qualitative assessments from different shippers.

35. The article of manufacture of claim 33 wherein said qualitative assessment is associated with a shipper that furnishes said forecast associated with said each rating and wherein said second data section includes an identity of said shipper that furnishes said forecast associated with said each rating.

36. The article of manufacture of claim 31 wherein said quality assessment includes at least four of a set of criteria that includes demand, manufacturing readiness, manufacturing location, capacity, product, lane, and lane stability.

37. The article of manufacture of claim 31 wherein said derivative contract data represents futures contract data.

38. The article of manufacture of claim 31 wherein said derivative contract data represents option contract data.